

HEART SPEAKS TO HEART: THE GIFT OF HOLY COMMUNION

CATECHIST NOTES



SESSION 2

HOPE: Entering God's House (pp.24-37)

Before the session begins:

- Prepare a focal point (which may this week include symbols which remind you of church e.g. some photos of your local parish church, votive candles and a prayer used for lighting them, etc.).
- Serve refreshments (when this is possible).
- Invite the children as they come in to place the object they have brought in their 'backpacks' near the focal point (and remind them to take their objects back at the end of the session).
- If Treasure Hunt worksheets are to be distributed during the session, have them ready to give out towards the end of the session.
- If the **Help and Guidance** handout are to be distributed during the session or in advance for Session 3, have the sheets ready for distribution at the appropriate point in the session.
- It may be a good idea to have one or two photocopies of the relevant pages of *Heart Speaks to Heart* (pages 24-37) in case some participants have forgotten their books!

Catechists should be ready to help participants who may be struggling with the discussion. It may help to have pictures or images available or to point participants to this week's focal point.

Catechists should also be aware of families' stories, lives and struggles.

See suggested timings for each section of the session below: it is anticipated that pages 24-27 will take 10 minutes in total; pages 32-33 may take up to 15 minutes in total.

The Lead Catechist notes below are intended to be prompts for the sort of things Lead Catechists may say rather than scripts to be read out.

Welcome and Prayer

3-5 minutes

Lead Catechist:

- Welcomes everyone
- Asks participants to turn to **page 24** in their books
- Reads out the title of the session and says something like:
"In this second session we will be exploring God's house. Another word for God's house is 'church' and we'll be looking at our parish churches and all the interesting things we find there. Holy Mass is celebrated in God's house, in our churches."
- Asks everyone to join in the **prayer on page 25** ("Lord Jesus, You are the Bread of Life ..."), leads everyone in making the Sign of the Cross and then leads the prayer

Pages 26-27 ("Welcome back")

5-7 minutes

Lead Catechist:

- Asks participants to turn to **page 26**
- Says something like:
"I hope you've had the chance to read these pages and think about the questions at the bottom of page 27.
1. What First Holy Communion preparation have you been doing at home since last time?
2. Why do you think that people go to church?
Take time now to share together your responses to these questions."
- May encourage participants to read pages 26-27 again before they talk about the questions

Pages 28-29 ("Today's virtue is Hope")**5 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Asks participants to turn to **page 28**
- Says something like:
"This week we will be thinking about the virtue of Hope. The virtues help us to grow in friendship with Jesus and become the best person we can be. Let's read what it says about Hope on page 28."
- **EITHER** asks participants to read page 28 together **OR** reads the text aloud to the whole group **OR** invites two participants to read out a paragraph each to the whole group

Pages 30-31 ("Our hope is in Jesus")**10 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Asks participants to turn to **page 30**
- Says something like:
"Let's listen now to a story from the Bible. As you listen, underline words which stand out for you on pages 30-31 and think about what they may mean. After you have listened to the story, share with each other the words and thoughts which meant something to you. Begin to write and draw your thoughts in the spaces beside the Bible passage. You can finish this off at home."
- **EITHER** reads the Bible passage of the Presentation slowly and clearly **OR** invites participants to read the passage to one another **OR** plays the audio of the text (found under **Audios – Bible Passages > Session 2 Our Hope is in Jesus**)
- Asks participants to share and write down or draw their thoughts

Pages 32 ("Journeying in hope")**8-10 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Asks participants to turn to **page 32**
- Says something like:
"Read the left-hand column on page 32 together, taking it in turns to read a paragraph each, and then read the questions in the right-hand column and talk together, trying to answer one or two of these questions."

Page 33 ("Offering hope")**5-7 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Asks participants to look at **page 33** and think about lighting a candle for someone and to write a prayer in the space on the candle for that person

Page 34 ("God's House")**5 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Asks participants to turn to **page 34**
- Says something like:
"Read page 34 together, taking it in turns to read a paragraph each."

Note: there may not be time to do this section during this session and catechists may advise participants to do it all or (if begun) to complete it at home.

Treasure Hunt

Lead Catechist draws participants' attention to the Treasure Hunt on **page 35** and explains how this week's Treasure Hunt may be done.

Page 36 ("Things to do at home or in church")**5 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Goes through the home/church activities on **page 36**
- Arranges for this week's Treasure Hunt worksheets to be given out (if the Treasure Hunt is to be done before the next session)
- Asks the children to read pages 40-41 and think about the questions there in preparation for the next session

Evaluation**5 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Asks participants to consider two questions, talk together about them and write down thoughts on post-its.
- The two questions are:
 - 1. What did you enjoy in the session? [2 minutes]**
 - 2. If we were to do the session again what could make it even better? [2 minutes]**

Page 37 (“Let us pray together”)**5 minutes**

Lead Catechist:

- Invites participants to sit quietly and close their eyes
- Says something like:
 - “I’m going to say a little phrase three or four times. Say these words silently to yourselves and continue to say them silently after I finish speaking. I will signal the end of this quiet prayer time” [perhaps by ringing a bell]
- Says aloud, “Lord, my eyes have seen Your salvation” three or four times and then allows for 2-3 minutes silence
- Gives the pre-arranged signal after 2-3 minutes silence
- Asks participants to look at the right-hand column on **page 37**
- Reads the words at the top of the column and:
 - Invites everyone to pray the first lines of the “Hail, Holy Queen” prayer
 - Invites everyone to bring their own prayers (aloud or in silence) to Mary
 - After a short period of prayer, asks all participants to join together in praying the final 3 lines on the page (“Pray for us, O holy mother of God ...”).

Thank everyone for their participation in the session and let them know you are available after the session if anyone has any questions.

Finish on time!

Try and meet as a catechist & helpers team after the session to discuss how the session has gone and what could be done better in future sessions.

Please feel free to annotate these *Catechist Notes* and use them to help your reflection for future sessions.